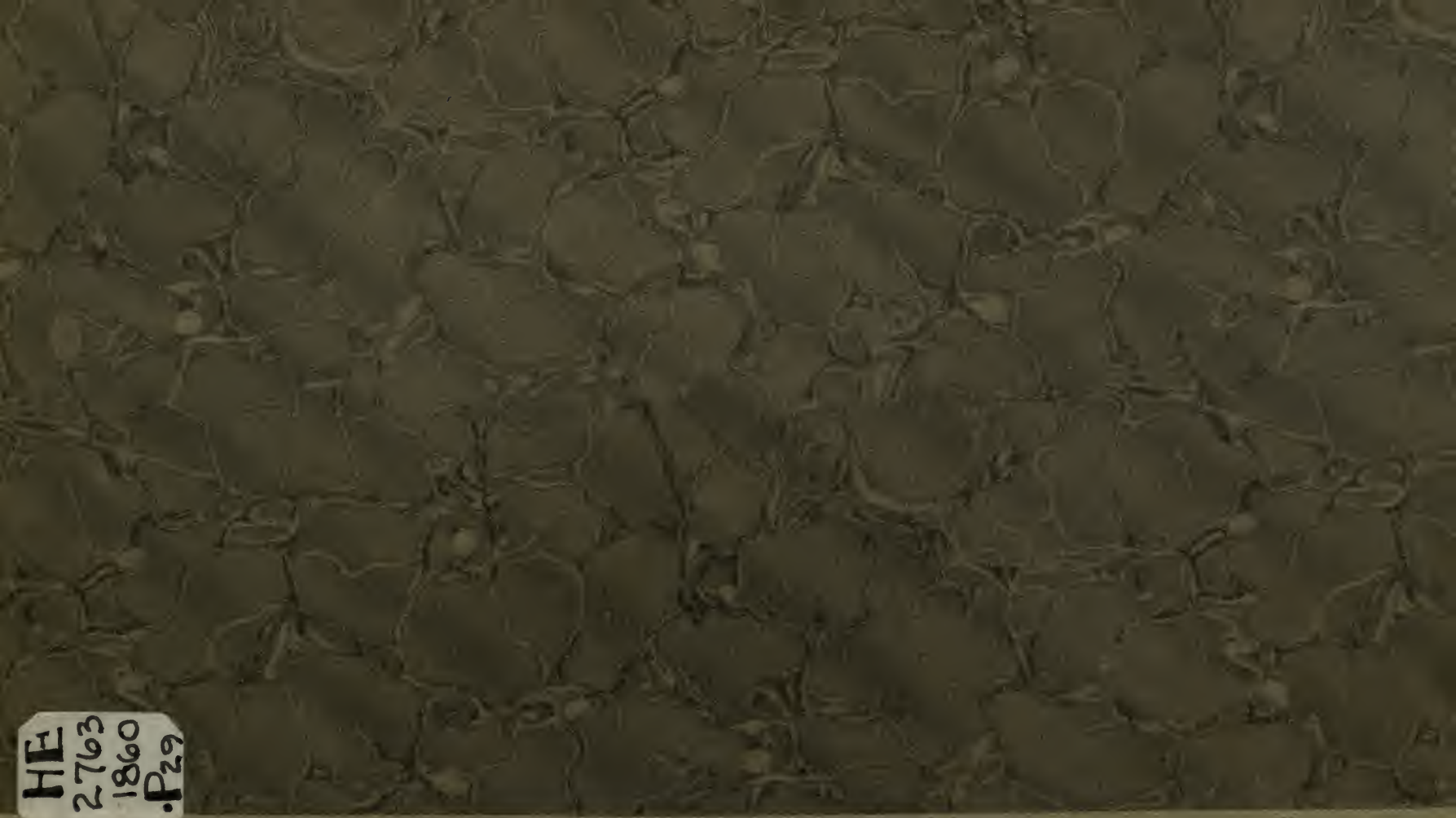

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# MEMORIAL

OF

# The People's Pacific Railroad Company,

IN AID OF THEIR PETITION OF 16TH APRIL, 1860.

BY JOSIAH PERHAM, PRESIDENT.

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# MEMORIAL

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# The People's Pacific Railroad Company,

IN AID OF THEIR PETITION OF 16TH APRIL, 1860.

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*To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:*

The undersigned, President of the Board of Commissioners of the People's Pacific Railroad Company, a company chartered by the Legislature of the State of Maine for the purpose of building a railroad from the Missouri river by way of the Pike's Peak Gold Mines and Utah to the city of San Francisco, on the Pacific coast; by order of said Board of Commissioners, would respectfully present the following petition and statement in aid of our petition presented to both Houses of Congress on the 16th day of April last.

In that petition we respectfully asked Congress to grant the right of way across the Territories of the United States, and make such grants of land as they may deem just and equitable for the promotion of an object which for years has excited the highest interest throughout the whole country.

From the 7th of May last until the adjournment of Congress on the 25th of June, the undersigned remained in Washington, to become acquainted with members of Congress, to get their views on the subject of a Pacific Railroad, and also, to become acquainted and get the views of private citizens from different parts of the United States, which were then in Washington.

From the information thus obtained we became fully impressed with the belief that it was not for the want of a disposition of the members of Congress to aid in the construction of a Pacific Railroad, but for the want of some general and specific plan which would commend itself, and meet the wants of the country.

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Therefore, on the adjournment of Congress, our Board of Commissioners earnestly set themselves to work to devise a plan for the construction of a Pacific Railroad that would meet the views of Congress and the people of the whole country, for that purpose we opened books for the subscription of stock in several of our Atlantic cities, and likewise in towns and villages in many of the States.

By calling upon people to subscribe for stock, we could generally get their attention sufficiently to hear their views on the subject, we found many viewed it as a visionary scheme, especially among the wealthy, but among the masses, the bone and muscle of the country, they said a road could be built on our plan, that is by subscription from the people in small sums with the aid of the Government, yet, thousands would not subscribe, they said, until Congress had agreed to aid in its constructiou, but with perseverance and great labor we have found whole souled patriots who have run the risk to subscribe and pay in the first installment, saying, "We will do so much to aid you in your noble efforts, with the belief that Congress will come to your aid when they know with what untiring zeal you are prosecuting this glorious enterprise."

We have more than twenty men, in different parts of the country, soliciting subscription to the stock of the People's Pacific Railroad, and our subscriptions have reached to nearly two millions of dollars.

In asking for subscriptions to our stock, we have found many who would prefer to subscribe for stock in a Northern Pacific Railroad, from the western border of Minnesota to Puget Sound, while others would prefer to subscribe for stock in a Southern Pacific Railroad. We have subscribers of stock in ten different States of our Union, and one hundred shares subscribed by citizens of Texas — the State presided over by that noble statesman and patriot, the hero of San Jacinto.

The subscribers said they would prefer to aid in the construction of a Southern Pacific Railroad, but at any rate they would favor the building of a road on the plan proposed by the *People's Pacific Railroad Company.*

Having conversed with the people from all parts of the United States — the North, the South, the East, the West, and central portions of this great country — for the purpose of obtaining their views, and learning their wants, the Board of Commissioners have arrived at the conclusion that the country needs three Pacific railroads, and that the whole people of the country will not be satisfied with less than that number. Therefore I am instructed by said Board of Commissioners to ask aid of Congress, in not only for the People's Pacific Railroad, but

also to aid in the construction of a Northern and Southern Pacific Railroad.

As to the practicability of building railroads on these routes, there can be no doubt. They have all been examined and reported favorably upon by some of our best and most eminent engineers, to whose reports you are referred; and would also refer you to the very able reports of the majority and minority of the select committee of fifteen on the Pacific Railroad, of the present House of Representatives. Mr. Aldrich, of Minnesota, from the minority of the committee, presented a very able and elaborate report, on the 16th of April last, showing why a Northern Railroad should be constructed. On the 28th of May last, Governor Stevens, delegate from Washington Territory, made a very able and conclusive speech on that subject in the House of Representatives, which should convince every one that reads it that a Northern Pacific Railroad should be constructed. That speech which covers the whole ground, and is so national in its sentiments, that I have caused copies of it to be laid on the table of each member, with the hope that it will be carefully examined.

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In asking the people of Canada to subscribe for stock in the People's Pacific Railroad, while they approved our plans and acknowleged that the road should be built, they replied that they would aid in the construction of a Northern road with the Eastern terminus near Lake Superior, and the Western terminus on Puget Sound, because it would accommodate their Northwestern possessions and give business to the Grand Trunk railroad. When the Prince of Wales was in this country in conversotion with members of his suite, they informed us that the British Government was very desirous of having a railroad connection with their Northwest coast, and they believed they would have such communication within seven years, but said if the American people and government should construct one in their possessions, on or near the forty-seventh parallel of North latitude, it would supersede the necessity of their building a road, and that British capital could be obtained to aid in its construction, if built on the plan proposed by the People's Pacific Railroad Company. They further intimated that the British Government might be inclined to make a contract with the road in connection with the Grand Trunk, to convey mails, troops, and public stores, for a term of twenty or fifty years, paying at the rate of five millions of dollars per annum. I think it would be safe to calculate if our people will commence immediately to build the Northern railroad, that capital from the Canadas and from England could be obtained in the shape of subscriptions of stock to the amount of ten millions of

dollars, while if the Northern road is not built, we cannot expect more than one or two millions of subscriptions from the same quarter to build the Central or People's road.

The reasons why the Central or People's Pacific Railroad should be constructed are so obvious, that we need say but very little on that subject; everybody believes and says it should be constructed in the quickest possible time. There are more than three hundred thousand people that travel over a portion or the whole of that route every year, nine-tenths of the land travel between the Eastern States and California go by this route—this is the Pony Express route, the route on which the Telegraph line is now being constructed, and the route on which thousands of teams have traveled over, with more than two tons of freight to each load.

For more particulars with regard to this route, I will refer you to the very able report of Mr. Curtis of Iowa, chairman of the Select committee of fifteen.

Of the Southern route I have not been able to obtain so much information as of the others, except by the reports of Engineers and of the very remarkably able and lucid report of Mr. Hamilton of Texas, from the minority of the Select Committee.

That report I commend to the consideration of every member of Congress before they take a vote on the question; the broad and national sentiments contained therein should be responded to by every lover of the Union.

The Southern Pacific Railroad is wanted for the protection of our people on our Southern borders and to aid us in taking care of the people of the Northern States of Mexico, which we must do, if we do not break up ourselves.

By that report it is clearly shewn that Government have the Constitutional right to aid companies in the construction of the Pacific Railroads in the manner proposed, and will be perfectly safe in advancing their Bonds to the amount of one hundred million of dollars.

Thereupon under instruction from the Commissioners of the People's Pacific Railroad Company, I have caused a bill for three Pacific Railroads to be prepared which was presented to the House by Mr. Aldrich of Minnesota on Thursday last, and I am instructed to ask the passage of that bill by a unanimous vote of both Houses of Congress.

That bill has been examined by the best lawyers in and out of Congress, and pronounced the best Pacific Railroad bill ever offered.

If in the wisdom of Congress it shall be decided that three Pacific Railroads are too much for the people of the United States to under-

take to build, then I am instructed to ask respectfully and earnestly the passage of so much of the bill as relates to the People's Pacific Railroad Company.

By the provisions of the bill, the People's Pacific Railroad Company are required to construct two hundred and fifty miles on the eastern section of the road, from their own resources, before asking bonds of the government, and the bonds only on the last fifty miles, and so on for every additional fifty miles constructed, and this provision applies to both the other roads.

We did not make provision in the bill for government bonds to aid in the construction of the roads through Texas or Minnesota, as we were informed that large grants of land had already been granted for the construction of the roads in these States. In Texas, sixteen sections of land to a mile is granted by that State, and a loan, as we are informed, of six thousand dollars per mile.

In Minnesota six sections of land per mile have been granted by Congress, to aid in the construction of a road, and we are informed, also, that mortgage bonds have been issued on the Southern Pacific Railroad in Texas, and the road in Minnesota, therefore we did not suppose that either of these roads could give the government a first mortgage lien on these roads, but I am instructed to say by the Board of Commissioners of the People's Pacific Railroad Company, that they will not object to government aiding the Southern Pacific Railroad in Texas, and a road through Minnesota to connect with the Northern Pacific Railroad, to the amount of ten thousand dollars per mile, provided government can have a first mortgage lien on said roads, and that each Company will build two hundred and fifty miles of their roads from their own resources, in the manner required of the People's Pacific Railroad Company, and never put on any mortgage or construction bonds on said roads in any way, except to the United States.

It should be the policy of government in aiding the construction of railroads by a loan of their credit to do it, so far as possible, as to protect the stockholders. If no mortgage or construction bonds are allowed to be put upon the road, nor mortgage or lien in any way, except to the United States, the people will feel safe to subscribe for stock; the people, in reality are the government, which is carried on by agents chosen by themselves. How easy the French government can raise a large loan of money in their own country, by making government bonds as small as fifty, or even ten dollars, so that every one can contribute to the loan; so in our case, if we have our Pacific Railroad charters and grants from Government so guarded that no one person can

subscribe for more than 100 shares of $100 each, and that every one have the right to subscribe for one share and no mortgage or construction bond can be put upon the road except to Government, you will find the people ready and anxious to take this stock because they will not only by so doing benefit themselves but enrich the whole country, but on the other hand if the companies constructing these roads are allowed to put mortgage and construction bonds upon them and sell their bonds in the market at twenty-five per cent discount, no one will subscribe for stock because they will feel that the roads will be taken from them by a foreclosure as it has been done in many other cases.

By the passage of this bill, and the construction of the three roads, it will bind the country so firmly together by interest and association, that it can never be separated. If one part of the country tramples on the right of the other — if the difficulty cannot be settled in any other way — it will be settled by fighting *in* the Union, and not *out* of it.

The Northern Pacific Railroad will accommodate the South as well as the North. By the connection of the Illinois Central and other roads with the roads leading to New Orleans, Mobile, Savannah, Charleston, Richmond, and other Southern ports on the Atlantic, the whole South will be accommodated. It will make a large market for the cotton, rice, sugar, and other products of the South.

By the construction of the three Pacific railroads, immigration and capital from Europe will flow to our country in such profusion as was never before realized by any country. Before the government bonds will become due, our population will have reached one hundred millions, and New York will have become the largest commercial city of the world. It will be a rich and happy country, for we shall have the command of the riches of the whole world — every country will be tributary to us.

Even by the passage of this bill, which will show that Congress regards the rights of every section, it will help to allay the strife and ill feeling now existing and will at once relieve, to some extent, the existing embarrassments. For if this bill passes no one will believe that this Government is to be broken up.

By the passage of this bill it is believed that it will create such confidence among the people, that Congress is determined to regard the rights of every section of the country and do justice by all, that all unfriendly laws passed by any one section against another will be repealed, and that everybody will mind their own business, try to be good neighbors and build the Pacific Railroads.

There will be no rivalry, but emulation by each section to get their road constructed first.

The Commissioners of the People's Pacific Railroad Company have regarded with much alarm and sorrow the present distracted state of the public mind.

When heretofore the public mind has been distracted, and a civil war was iminent, we have had wise and great men, whose counsels have been heeded, and the strife allayed. We have been looking for some of our great men in the councils of the country now to come forward with some leading act that will quiet and allay the excitement. We have asked, is there no George Washington, no Henry Clay, no John C. Calhoun, no John Quincy Adams, no Daniel Webster, left to whose counsels the country in many dark hours have looked for relief?

Is there no Andrew Jackson left to bring us to our senses? What answer can we give to these questions?

Under this state of things, what are true patriots to do? It has been generally supposed that no one can become a great man unless he has been in the councils of his country, or been in the army or navy.

In conversing with the Hon. J. J. Crittenden, one of the last of that band of patriots we all so loved and honored, to the question put to him, "Can you not devise some means that will settle this strife?" he replied, with tears coursing down his cheeks, "I have tried, but my counsels are not heeded; but my continued prayer to God is, that in His wisdom he will so overrule and direct the councils of the country, that the Union may be saved," and turning to us he said, "you must aid us all in your power." This exclamation came upon us with the power of thunder! We aid in saving the Union? What can any so humble as we are do to save the country?

Our Board of Commissioners, who are lovers of the Union, whose arms are so long, and hearts so big, as to embrace and love the people of the whole country — the North, the South, the East, and the West — and knowing that the masses of the people of every part of the country are honest, however they may be led away for a time by unprincipled men, and believing that although in the humbler walks of life they can feel and appreciate the feelings of every honest man of every State, county, and town of this great country, the Commissioners have, with great diffidence, directed me, in case the passage of the Pacific railroad bill does not settle the difficulties of the country, to offer our mediation in building the roads, for the settlement of all remaining causes of dissatisfaction with the different parties of Congress, and between Congress and any of the States, and between any of the States.

And we do most respectfully request Congress to devote one whole day to the Union. We do earnestly, but most respectfully, ask each and every member of Congress to read the report of Mr. Curtis, the chairman of the Select Committee on the Pacific Railroad; also, the minority reports of Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Aldrich; the speech of Gov. Stevens; the charter granted by the Legislature of the State of Maine for the construction of the People's Pacific Railroad; and also examine carefully the provisions of the bill presented in the House of Representatives by Mr. Aldrich for the construction of three Pacific Railroads, and then vote on that question as you believe will be for the best good of our beloved country. And with fervent prayer to God to forgive us all our sins, we will join Mr. Crittenden in invoking the Almighty Ruler of the universe to grant you wisdom to direct the affairs of this great country so as to cause contentment and happiness among all the people.

JOSIAH PERHAM, *President.*

WASHINGTON, D. C., *December* 18, 1860.